

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An interactive method for on-line selection of an air conditioning product, comprising the steps of:

providing a database storing a plurality of air conditioning product identifiers and at least one corresponding product characteristic;

interactively obtaining intended use information from a consumer for a desired air conditioning product and intended use location;

equating said intended use information with an intended use product characteristic;

identifying a suitable product having said at least one product characteristic meeting said intended use product characteristic; and

identifying said suitable product to said consumer.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said database is stored at a server location and wherein said intended use information is obtained from said consumer at a client location communicated with said server location by Internet.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein said identifying step further includes offering said product to said consumer for purchase.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein said corresponding product characteristic includes a BTU rating for each product of said plurality of product identifiers.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein said corresponding product characteristic includes a BTU rating for each product, and wherein said step of interactively obtaining comprises:

obtaining intended use location area from said consumer; transforming said intended use location area into an initial acceptable BTU capacity for said intended use location area;

obtaining further intended use location information from said consumer;

determining a correction factor from said further intended use location information; and

applying said correction factor to said initial acceptable BTU capacity so as to obtain a corrected acceptable BTU capacity, and wherein said equating step comprises identifying said suitable product having said BTU rating meeting said corrected acceptable BTU capacity.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein said further intended use location information includes an indication from said consumer as to area of exterior facing glass at said intended use location, and wherein said corrected acceptable BTU capacity is determined as follows:

$$R_c = R_I + (C \cdot 60), \text{ wherein}$$

R_I is said initial acceptable BTU capacity in BTU/hour,

R_c is said corrected acceptable BTU capacity in BTU/hour and

C is said area of exterior facing glass in square feet.

7. The method of claim 5, wherein said further intended use location information includes an indication from said consumer as to whether said intended use location is in sun or shade, and wherein said corrected acceptable BTU capacity is determined as follows:

if sun, $R_c = R_I \cdot 1.1$; and

if shade, $R_c = R_I \cdot 0.95$; wherein

R_I is said initial acceptable BTU capacity in BTU/hour,
and

R_C is said corrected acceptable BTU capacity in
BTU/hour.

8. The method of claim 5, wherein said further intended use location information includes an indication from said consumer that a space above said intended use location is one of a roof, an attic, and an occupied room, and wherein said corrected acceptable BTU capacity is determined as follows:

if roof, $R_C = R_I$,

if attic, $R_C = R_I \cdot 0.85$, and

if occupied room, $R_C = R_I \cdot 0.8$, wherein

R_I is said initial acceptable BTU capacity in BTU/hour,
and

R_C is said corrected acceptable BTU capacity in
BTU/hour.

9. The method of claim 6, wherein said further intended use location information includes an indication from said consumer as to whether said intended use location is above a cooled space, and wherein said corrected acceptable BTU capacity is determined as follows:

if above a cooled space, $R_C = R_I \cdot 0.8$, and

if not above a cooled space, $R_C = R_I \cdot 0.9$, wherein

R_I is said initial acceptable BTU capacity in BTU/hour,
and

R_C is said corrected acceptable BTU capacity in
BTU/hour.

10. The method of claim 5, wherein said further intended use location information includes an indication from said consumer as to whether said desired air conditioning product

will be operated only at night, and wherein said corrected acceptable BTU capacity is determined as follows:

if operated only at night, $R_c = R_I \cdot 0.65$, and

otherwise, $R_c = R_I$, wherein

R_I is said initial acceptable BTU capacity in BTU/hour,
and

R_c is said corrected acceptable BTU capacity in
BTU/hour.

11. The method of claim 5, wherein said further intended use location information includes an indication from said consumer as to geographic location and wherein said step of determining said BTU correction factor includes determining a correction factor for said geographic location.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein said database stores a series of geographic location indicators and a series of correction factors corresponding to said geographic location indicators, and wherein said further intended use location information from said consumer includes a geographic location indicator.

13. The method of claim 12, further comprising the steps of determining an intended use location climate factor from said geographic location indicator, and determining a corrected acceptable product capacity as follows:

$R_c = R_I \cdot CF$, wherein

R_I is said initial acceptable BTU capacity in BTU/hour,

R_c is said corrected acceptable BTU capacity in
BTU/hour, and

CF is said intended use location climate factor.

14. The method of claim 5, wherein said further intended use location information includes a number of occupants of said intended use location, and wherein said corrected acceptable BTU capacity is determined as follows:

$$R_c = [(I-2) \times 60] + R_I, \text{ wherein}$$

R_I is said initial acceptable BTU capacity in BTU/hour,

R_c is said corrected acceptable BTU capacity in
BTU/hour, and

I is said number of occupants.

15. The method of claim 5, wherein said further intended use location information includes an indication from said consumer as to whether said intended use location includes a kitchen, and wherein said corrected acceptable BTU capacity is determined as follows:

if kitchen, $R_c = R_I + 4,800$; and

if no kitchen, $R_c = R_I + 300$; wherein

R_I is said initial acceptable BTU capacity in BTU/hour,
and

R_c is said corrected acceptable BTU capacity in
BTU/hour.

16. The method of claim 5, wherein said database stores a series of product identifiers and corresponding ranges of product BTU ratings, and wherein said series is divided into a first portion applicable to air conditioning products which only cool and which mount through a window, a second portion applicable to air conditioning products which only cool and which mount through a wall, and a third portion applicable to air conditioning products which cool and heat, wherein said further intended use location information includes an indication from said consumer as to whether said desired air conditioning product is to be mounted in a wall or a window, and whether said

desired air conditioning product must be able to cool and heat, and wherein said identifying step includes identifying said suitable product using said corrected acceptable BTU capacity and one of said first portion if said desired air conditioning product is to be mounted in a window and only cool, said second portion if said desired air conditioning product is to be mounted in a wall and only cool, and said third portion if said desired air conditioning product must cool and heat.

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